Hill Panel to Hear Kleindienst on ITT

3/2/72

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Acting Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst and syndicated columnist Jack Anderson will testify at a quickly summoned meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee this morning.

The meeting, convened at Kleindienst's request, could develop into a full-scale review of the Nixon administration's handling of a multi-billion dollar merger involving the International Telephone and Telegraph Corp.

The cast, brought together on barely 24 hours notice, will include a federal judge, at least one director of ITT, the conglomerate's Washington lobbyist, and possibly former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and former Republican Gov. Louie B. Nunn of Kentucky.

At issue is Anderson's allegation that the administration agreed to a compromise settlement of federal antitrust charges against ITT in exchange for a $400,000 contribution to defray costs of the Republican National Convention in San Diego this summer.

In a column published in The Washington Post yesterday, Anderson contended that Kleindienst participated in alleged political and legal negotiations to settle the ITT case during "roughly half a dozen secret meetings" with Wall Street financier Felix Rohatyn, an ITT director.

Kleindienst acknowledged during a private session with three Senate Democrats yesterday afternoon that he had indeed met with Rohatyn on several occasions.

But according to Senate sources, Kleindienst made an "outright denial of any wrongdoing" in his talks with Rogatyn and promised a full

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disclosure today of the circumstances surrounding them.

Some committee members were dissatisfied with Kleindienst's explanation, however, pointing out that he told Democratic National Chairman Lawrence O'Brien in a letter last fall that "the settlement beween the Department of Justice and ITT was handled and negoiated exclusively by Assistant Attorney General Richared W. McLaren."

McLaren, who headed the Antitrust Division at the Justice Department until his recent appointment as a federal district judge in Chicago was summoned to today's hearing at Kleindienst's suggestion.

He is expected to be asked for a full explanation of the antitrust settlement and quizzed about reports that he opposed the compromise with ITT and had hoped the case would reach the Supreme Court.

Rohatyn also will appear before the Judiciary Committee, as will Dita D. Beard, the ITT lobbyist whose internal memorandum discussing the alleged $400,000 pledge surfaced in Anderson's column Monday.

Mrs. Beard's memo said that, "Mitchell is definitely helping us, but cannot let it be known."

Mitchell, in an interview with reporters as he stepped down as Attorney General yesterday, reaffirmed his earlier denial that he had made any special deals with Mrs. Beard when he met her at a party in the Kentucky governor's mansion after the Kentucky Derby last year.

On the contrary, Mitchell told reporters, he had advised Mrs. Beard to "stop lobbying" when they met at the party.

A spokesman for Sen. James O. Eastland (D-Miss.), chairman of the Judiciary Committee, said last night that Eastland had "no idea" whether Mitchell would appear today to discuss Anderson's allegations.

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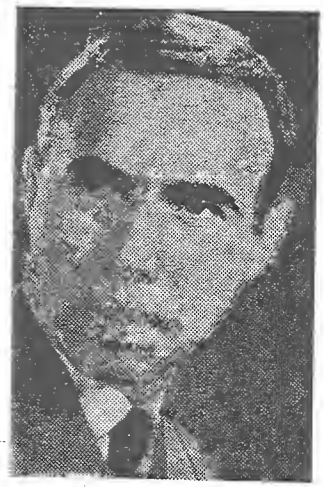

These International Telephone and Telegraph Co. officials involved in the controversy are, from left, Harold Geneen, president and chairman of the board; Dita B. Beard, chief Washington lobbyist; Felix Rohatyn, a board director and financier.

But Senate sources said that Kleindienst, during his meeting with the Democrats yesterday afternoon, told them Mitchell would attend the hearing.

The three Senate Democrats who met yesterday with Kleindienst—also at the acting Attorney General's request—were Birch Bayh of Indiana, Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts and John V. Tunney of California.

After grilling Kleindienst on policy matters during hearings last week on his nomination as Attorney General, the three endorsed him for the Cabinet post.

Kennedy filed "individual views" on Tuesday, however, criticizing Kleindienst as "a willing and vociferous" defender of allegedly anti-civil libertarian positions of the Justice Department over the past three years.

Kleindienst's nomination was on the Senate calendar for consideration on the floor yesterday, but was postponed pending the new hearing today. Now, it may not be voted upon by the Senate until next week.

The nominee automatically became acting Attorney General at midnight when Mitchell's resignation went into effect.

Bayh, Kennedy and Tunney were reportedly satisfied yesterday that Kleindienst would be able to explain the ITT affair at today's hearing. But Senate sources said that the three, as well as other Democrats on the committee, were reserving judgment on whether to oppose Kleindienst until he and the other witnesses have testified.

Eastland stressed that today's hearing does not constitute a formal reopening of consideration of Kleindienst's nomination, because it has already been reported favorably by the Judiciary Committee.

After his session with the Democrats yesterday—in the office of Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana—Kleindienst met privately with Sen. Roman Hruska of Nebraska, ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee.

Later, Kleindienst met for 15 minutes with all the Republican members of the committee in the office of Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania.

Scott said that Kleindienst's explanation of the circumstances surrounding settlement of the ITT antitrust case was "substantially different" from the accounts published in Anderson's column.

The minority leader proclaimed himself satisfied that Kleindienst will provide "a full and adequate answer" to the allegations during the hearing today.

In another development, Richard L. Herman, vice chairman of the arrangements committee for the Republican convention, said yesterday that the reported $400,000 pledge, if true, would not be accepted because it would amount to payment of a "disproportionate" share of convention costs by a single corporation.

Herman acknowledged, however, that he was not sure how a local committee in San Diego had raised $100,000 already in hand to help meet convention costs.

He also said that the arrangements committee hopes to sell the Sheraton Corp., an ITT subsidiary, a $25,000 advertisement in the convention program.

Ill. Budget for '73 Totals $7.5 Billion

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., March 1 (AP) — Gov. Richard B. Ogilvie of Illinois today submitted a record total budget for 1973 of $7.5 billion.